

The editorial board at the *Muncie Star Press* picked up on a piece of the Democrats' government takeover of health care that was less noticed: the governments' takeover of the student lending industry:



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[OUR VIEW: Health-reform package contains nasty surprise](#)

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Health-reform legislation passed just four days, but new discoveries keep cropping up.

Seems the bill goes far beyond reforming health; it also has the potential to substantially alter the employment picture of Muncie and Delaware County in a bad way.

It's yet another example of an out-of-control Congress that just can't say no to expanding government's reach into every corner of society.

Just to be clear, we're not discussing the pros or cons of the health bill; it's the Christmas tree ornaments that Congress hung off it to assure its passage.

The main one (at least that we know of so far; it takes time to wade through 2,409 pages

of legislation) will expand the government's Pell Grant programs at the expense of private student loan originators such as Sallie Mae.

The result: Under a worst-case scenario, Muncie might lose 700 jobs at its Sallie Mae call center on the city's north side. A Star Press article on Tuesday said the company might have to cut its 8,600 total workforce by 2,500 workers and reduce its national locations from 25 to about six. It's unknown how Muncie might fare if the company starts closing offices.

The federal government is taking private sector jobs and adding to the government's bloated expenditures.

Sneaking student loan reform into the health bill thwarted any effort to have a rational debate about the issue. It denied any effort for private loan originators to come up with a plan to satisfy the Obama administration, whose mantra seems to be "more is always better."

Of lesser consequence, but yet another example of marrying unrelated topics into legislation, is the requirement that chain restaurants post information on menus about the calories in their food.

It sounds like a good idea; who could argue about getting information about the food we eat and how much it will make us fatter?

We just wish it could have been done in a separate bill.

Congress must end the practice of bundling bills into one omnibus package. But we know that will not happen in a system that's now built on quid pro quo.

In reality, the only way this nonsense with Congress will end is when the voters have said "enough." But as many opinion polls indicate, voters hate Congress, but love their

congressman.

Let's hope our elected officials love us as much. We'll need it when the Senate takes up the health-care bill.

Any hope to save local jobs lies in the Senate, if language to strike the student-loan reform is inserted into a bill that "fixes" the health-reform package.